

The Palestinians and Israel

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When I was a child, I used to go with my late father for long walks around the Valley of Jezreel. We used to meet Arabs, and they, especially in the winter, covered their heads with their kafiyas, so that only their noses and eyes remained visible. My father, who was not born in the country—he came from Russia at the age of seventeen—used to say: “Look, they have the look of murderers.” But these Arabs were not murderers, they were simple fellahin, and because it was cold and rainy they covered their heads with their kafiya and agal and of all their face you saw nothing but a nose and glistening eyes—which to me seemed dark and beautiful. My father, on the other hand, imagined that he saw through the kafiya the looks he recalled from his shtetl in Russia.

—Moshe Dayan, in a speech in Jaffa, February 14, 1969

THREE YEARS have now passed since the Six-Day War, and there seems to be no end in sight to the impasse into which it has led Israeli-Arab relations. In the summer of 1967 hope was in the air: most Israelis shared the belief, nurtured by a mixture of naiveté and arrogance, that the war had finally opened the door to peace. If before June 1967 most Arabs had believed that Israel could be easily defeated, the Six-Day War—so the reasoning went—proved that Israel was here to stay. Hence, the argument continued, the Arabs would now realize that they had no choice but to cut their losses and pursue an alternative, and to them less costly, policy. In return for peace, i.e., recognition on the part of the Arabs of the legitimacy of Israel, Israel had quite a formidable package to exchange: the territories she had captured from Egypt, Jordan, and Syria.

We all know better now. The net gain of the 1967 war was not a diminishing of the Arab-Israeli conflict, but rather an intensification of it. However the war may have affected the political consciousness of the Arabs, it certainly did not reconcile them to the existence of Israel, nor did the prowess of the Israeli armed forces cow them into submission. Those Israelis who in the past had been accustomed to assert that the only lan-

guage the Arabs understand is the language of force, proved to be as wrong as ever. Humiliation breeds stubbornness, and the very fact of Israel's victory served only to widen the chasm between her and the Arabs. The dialectic of the self-fulfilling prophecy was at work again. Israel could beat her breast in genuine innocence, proclaim that she had no expansionist aims, that she had been pushed into a corner by the Arabs in May 1967, and that consequently she had to strike back in despair and self-defense. But do not the Israelis now control, as a result of the war, the whole area from Kuneitra to Kantara, from Mt. Hermon to the Suez, and do not Israeli leaders make it clear that a return to the frontiers of June 5, 1967, is quite unthinkable? As Cecil Hourani so pointedly tried to tell his fellow Arabs, their total rejection of Israel had consistently redounded to Israel's advantage. Had they accepted the UN partition plan in 1947, a much smaller Israel, and one with a sizable Arab minority at that, would have been established alongside a more populous Palestinian Arab state; similarly, had they not rocked the boat in 1967, Israel would still be encased in her precarious borders of 1949, with a narrow waistline around Natanya, with Jerusalem still half in Jordanian hands, and with Eilat rather than Sharm el-Sheikh as Israel's southernmost point.

Another unforeseen consequence of the Six-Day War has been that Israel, which was formerly an abstraction to most Arabs, has now become concrete and real to many Arabs who could not have cared less about the Jewish state—or about the Palestinians—before 1967. The ongoing war of attrition reaches deep into Arab territory; Israel's forces are stationed on the Suez Canal; her planes regularly penetrate the Egyptian heartland; the industrial complex of Port Said-Ismailia-Port Suez is in shambles. And contrary to Israeli hopes, the Arabs have reacted to this newly imposed realization of Israel's existence not by recognizing it as fact, let alone by granting that fact legitimacy; rather, the “reality” of Israel has served to mobilize support for the continuing war against her. The average Egyptian, even if he generally supported the anti-Israeli policies of Nasser, had very little stake in the conflict prior to 1967; now that the war has reached Port Said—if not Cairo itself—his feelings about the matter are more

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acute. Moreover, now that Nasser has succeeded in involving the Sudanese and Libyan military regimes in the Arab-Israeli conflict, the geographical as well as the politico-psychological scope of the conflict has become considerably enlarged.

Finally, there are the Palestinians, who in the two decades between 1949 and 1967 were subsumed under the various Arab states, but who now, due to the inability of the Arab governments not only to regain for the Palestinians their lost home, but even to defend their *own* borders, have come to the fore as an almost independent element in the conflict. To be sure, Palestinian guerrillas had been operating for several years before 1967; but during that time they were totally subservient to the various Arab governments that subsidized them. Thus, the Palestine Liberation Organization was an adjunct of Egyptian foreign policy, while *Al Fatah* was organized by the Syrian intelligence services. Since 1967, however, the *fedayeen* have become an autonomous power, far more active against Israel than before the war, dictating their own terms to the Jordanian and Lebanese governments; by now, even Nasser has to be careful not to alienate them completely.

These guerrilla organizations have so far shown no signs of succeeding in their aim of dislodging Israel from the occupied territories and destroying her as a state, and there is no reason to believe that in the future they will be more successful than hitherto. Nevertheless, to Israel's dismay, it is the Palestinians who have done the greatest damage to her world image; those who supported Israel wholeheartedly when she was menaced by Nasser's Egypt and when sixty million Arabs threatened to push her into the sea, tend to think differently now that the enemy has become defined as a band of people claiming to fight for the liberation of what they consider their homeland from foreign intruders. Nor is this the only achievement of the Palestinians; by conducting raids across the Jordan, by continuing to wage a war of terrorism against Israel after the massive Arab defeat in 1967, the Palestinians have kept the conflict open and have prevented both the solidification of the ceasefire lines into mutually accepted, semi-permanent frontiers, and the emergence of an accommodation between Israel and at least some of the Arab regimes.

The ideology of the Palestinian organizations has hardened since 1967—a development not usually noticed in the West, where the Palestinian propaganda machine, having learned that the rhetoric of genocide does not pay, is now trying to convey quite the opposite image of the guerrillas. Before 1967, the Palestine Liberation Organization was ready, at least on paper, to allow those Jews who had entered Palestine before 1948 to remain in the country after the destruction of Israel was accomplished. Now, according to the Palestinian National Covenant, as amended by the Fourth Palestinian Council in Cairo in July

1968, similar rights will be accorded only to those Jews who were in Palestine in 1917. All others will not be considered "Palestinians" and will have no place in the country after the destruction of Israel. Anyone taken in by *Fatah* propaganda about a secular Palestine, in which "Moslems, Christians, and Jews" will live peacefully side by side, should be reminded that most of the 2,500,000 Jews of Israel would be excluded from such a state. To an even greater degree than other Arab communities, the Palestinians have become more, not less, extreme since 1967.

THE CONFLICT is thus very much with us. But what sometimes disappears under the newspaper headlines and the daily flux of events in the Middle East is the nature of the conflict itself, and it is to this topic that I wish to turn now. It is perhaps easiest to begin by trying to explain what the conflict is *not*. Despite appearances, it is not—and never was—a struggle between the two Great Powers, though the powers have always had a stake in it. This statement may at first glance seem fantastic, especially at a time when the Arab-Israeli conflict has taken on the classical visage of an overt arms race and when on the one hand Israel is portrayed by the Soviets and the Arabs as the spearhead of U.S. imperialism, and on the other hand some of Israel's friends in America try to present her as the best ally the U.S. and Western democracy have ever had in the Middle East. Yet despite all this, the Middle East conflict has never truly been susceptible of analysis in cold-war terms.

At the risk of restating the obvious, let us examine the positions adopted by the Great Powers in each of the three outbreaks of war between Israel and the Arab states (1948, 1956, 1967). The UN proposal of 1947, that the British-mandated territory of Palestine be partitioned into a Jewish and an Arab state, was supported *jointly* by the USSR and the U.S. When the State of Israel declared its independence on May 15, 1948, the only arms at its disposal (aside from those stolen from the British) came from Czechoslovakia, and were delivered in token of Soviet support for Israel—a fact now conveniently forgotten by both the Soviets and the Arabs, and, on occasion, even by some Zionists. Not only did Israel not receive any arms from the West, the U.S. went so far as to declare an embargo on arms shipments to the Middle East, which, though intended to be non-partisan, in effect worked against Israel alone.

Both the USSR and the U.S. granted immediate diplomatic recognition to Israel, but whereas the Soviet recognition was *de jure*, the Americans limited themselves for the first year of Israel's existence to mere *de facto* recognition. In the summer of 1948, when the Soviet and American envoys arrived in Tel Aviv, only one hotel (the Käte Dan) was considered fit to house foreign dignitaries of such stature; so the Hammer and

Sickle and the Stars and Stripes were displayed side by side on the hotel front—an unusual sight in 1948, the year of the Czech *coup d'état* and the Berlin blockade. Soviet spokesmen, including the present Foreign Minister, Andrei Gromyko, waxed eloquent over the right of the Jews to their ancient homeland, condemned (with customary Soviet vehemence) the Arab attack on Israel, and called upon the Arabs to abide by UN decisions. It was Harry Truman who in the spring of 1948 appeared ambivalent over the partition question, and who for a time entertained the idea of some form of UN trusteeship and of scrapping the Jewish state altogether. At one stage during the war of 1948, Ben-Gurion decided to make public the names of the members of the Israeli General Staff (still kept secret in good conspiratorial fashion); his reason for doing so was to disprove rumors circulating in the Western press to the effect that Russian generals were directing the Israeli war effort: few people in 1948 were prepared to believe that the Jews could fight.

While Israel was thus supported—though in different forms—by *both* the Soviet Union and the United States, the Arab countries drew their support from the British and the French, who were still the paramount powers in the Middle East. Britain had military bases in Egypt and in Iraq, and trained these two countries' armies; Jordan's Arab Legion was even commanded by regular British army officers, headed by Brig.-Gen. Sir John Glubb Pasha. Syria and Lebanon were still very much under French influence. Late in the 1948-49 war, when Israeli forces penetrated a few miles into Sinai, a British ultimatum was dispatched to Israel, and British aircraft were sent in to convey to the Israelis that Britain would not tolerate any closer approach to the Suez Canal and its installations. The Israelis shot down five British Spitfires, but then Ben-Gurion (always the first among Israeli leaders to give in to foreign pressure) ordered a hasty withdrawal.

The mixed pattern of Great Power support for the local belligerents in this early period can be easily explained; in the years immediately after 1945, the Jewish *Yishuv* in Palestine was the only force in the Middle East fighting British imperialism and actively engaged in the attempt to dislodge England from the area. In restricting Jewish immigration to Palestine, even in the face of the emergency created by the Holocaust, Britain was catering to the wishes of its Arab client-states, for the Arab regimes—King Farouk in Egypt, Nuri Said in Iraq, Emir Abdullah in what was then Transjordan—were the instruments of British policy and the mainstays of British support in the Middle East. Obviously, then, the Soviets backed the only group, tiny and weak as it might then have seemed, which was trying to oust the British altogether. U.S. support for Israel was of a different order: in part it could be traced to bad conscience after the Holocaust, in part to the influ-

ence of the Jewish vote on a Democratic administration, and in still another part to a combination of idealistic enthusiasm for a new, vigorous, and democratic country and the shrewd calculation that the establishment of a Jewish state might lessen the pressures on the U.S. to admit Jewish refugees from Europe (the British were not altogether incorrect in their oblique references to the outright cynicism of some American demands for allowing Jewish immigration into Palestine). In no case was U.S. support motivated by any grand design of American foreign policy: the State Department was against the recognition of Israel,* and the American oil interests of course strongly supported the Arabs and opposed Israel (as they still do today).

By 1956, the picture had changed completely. Britain and France, anti-Israel in 1948, now supported Israel, and in the case of France even egged her on. The French at the time were engaged in a war in Algeria, where the FLN was heavily dependent upon Nasser's support. Both British and French interests had been substantially damaged by the Egyptian nationalization of the Suez Canal. With the emergence in the Arab world of nationalist anti-Western regimes like Nasser's, the Soviet Union had switched its support to the Arab cause, and the United States, though generally supporting Israel, opposed her and the French-English-Israeli alliance on the specific issue of Israel's war with Egypt in 1956. After the Sinai campaign, the U.S., together with the Soviet Union, put pressure on Israel to withdraw from Sinai without first having achieved peace terms. In 1956, then, as in 1948, the Soviet Union and the United States took the same line, the only difference being that in 1948 the line was pro-Israel, whereas in 1956 it was pro-Arab.

In 1967 the kaleidoscope pieces fell into yet another pattern: while the Soviet Union continued to support the Arabs, U.S. support for Israel (though hedged, especially on account of America's interest in Jordan) was stronger than ever before; France now abandoned its 1956 marriage of convenience (or, rather, concubinage) with Israel and reverted to its 1948 position of support for the Arabs; and Britain, though generally behind Israel, was much more lukewarm about it than in 1956. Britain clearly wished to emerge from the 1967 war as a possible honest broker in subsequent negotiations, although its eyes, of course, were also on the vestiges of British influence in the Arab countries.

Over the past twenty years, then, the great powers have repeatedly switched their basic positions

* George Kennan's remarks on this subject in his *Memoirs, 1925-1950* are typical of the anti-Israeli attitude then prevalent in many circles of the government, and especially in the State Department. Quite a lot of this tradition is still alive and kicking in Foggy Bottom.

and have played a complicated game of musical chairs with both sides in the Middle East conflict, yet the conflict is still there and still somehow involves none of the Great Powers directly.* Unlike all other post-1945 disputes, in which the roots of discord may always be seen to lie in the clash of Western vs. Soviet (or Chinese) policy, in the Arab-Israeli conflict Great Power rivalry is a secondary and derivative factor. The same can be said of ideological differences: there are probably more Marxists in Israel than in the whole of the Arab world, but the Soviet Union could not care less about that. Nor is it of any importance that in most Arab countries (including Egypt) Communist parties are outlawed and individual Communists rot in jail, whereas Israel is blessed with *two* Communist parties, both of them represented in the Knesset. Nothing along such lines could be envisaged in Korea, Berlin, Cuba, or Vietnam.

THE REAL conflict in the Middle East is not between the Great Powers, nor is it a conflict between imperialism and anti-colonialism, or between "democracy" and "Communism." Basically and ultimately it is a conflict between two movements for national liberation. Both of these movements are relative newcomers to political consciousness; both are internally problematical; both movements have suffered from a series of historical traumas; both are terribly unsure of themselves and groping toward self-identity. On top of everything else, both the Jewish and the Arab national movements lay claim to the same piece of land, historic Palestine, *Eretz Israel*—though for the Arabs, of course, Palestine is just one part of the great Arab homeland, while the Jewish national movement claims only *Eretz Israel* as its patrimony.

Though Jews and Arabs have been around for millennia, it was only in the last decades of the 19th century that a secular national movement emerged among either of them. And among both Arabs and Jews, this movement arose in response to challenges from the external society and to the impact of these challenges on the society itself. Zionism, in the case of the Jews, was a response to the secularization of Jewish life and to the emergence of national movements and ethnically-conscious nation-states in Eastern and Central Europe. In the case of the Arabs, the contact between the Ottoman Empire and the West, as well as the emergence of a secular, ethnic nationalism among the Turkish ruling group—a development that threatened to transform the Ottoman Empire from the religious home of the Believers (*Dar al-Islam*) into a secular state based on the ethnic superiority of the Turks—served to make the Arabs aware of their own ethnic and linguistic heritage

as against that of the Ottoman Turks. Though in its later stages Arab nationalism took for its main target the Western colonial powers, its initial impetus was directed in opposition to the ruling Turks, and both the British and the French were welcomed by Arab nationalists as disrupters of the old Ottoman Empire. It was as an ally of Arab nationalism that the West appeared among the Arabs—and "West" in this context includes also the American missionaries who founded the American University in Beirut, and whose efforts were directed toward making Christian Arabs conscious of their secular Arabism in order to weaken their connection with the Islamic Empire of the Turks and hence to win another battle in the Christian war against the infidels.

Arab spokesmen these days tend to emphasize the support given the Zionist movement by the British through the Balfour Declaration; they tend to forget, however, that at the same time that British diplomats were seeking the support of Jewish nationalism against the Turks and the Germans, British agents were aiding the Arab revolt against the Turks in the Hedjaz; for every Balfour there was a T. E. Lawrence. In point of fact, both national movements, the Jewish and the Arab, made ample use of any support they could get. In 1917, both had a common enemy—the Turks—and both had a common ally—the British. That it was naive, if not cynical, of the British to believe that they could play both cards simultaneously, attests to nothing other than the narrow-mindedness of those British statesmen who liked to pooh-pooh the impact of nationalism generally—that is, until nationalism blew the British Empire out of existence. But in 1917, at least, the leaders of the two national movements still believed that they could arrive at a common platform, as the short-lived agreement between Chaim Weizmann and King Feisal shows. Inexplicable as it may now seem, none other than Haj Amin el-Husseini, the Mufti of Jerusalem and latter-day collaborator with the Nazis in the "Final Solution," was among the participants at the dedication ceremonies of the Hebrew University; his name appears among the signatories of a document buried in the university's cornerstone.

Both the Jewish and the Arab national movements were faced with a similar social problem; one that took the form of a lopsided social structure. But in their approach to this problem the two movements took separate paths, and it is in this divergence that one can locate the essential distinction between Jewish and Arab nationalism. For while it is possible to maintain that the Jewish national movement succeeded in combining a national revolution with a social one, the Arab movement remained almost exclusively political; an Arab social revolution, indeed, has yet to be undertaken. The successful synthesis of the social and political realms gave Zionism its peculiar dynamism and strength, whereas the purely political

* The above was written prior to the recent disclosure of Soviet air activity in Egypt. Disquieting as this development may be, it does not substantially affect the thrust of my argument here.

nature of Arab nationalism, in Palestine as well as elsewhere, is at the root of its present tragic dilemma.*

The Jewish problem, as it was defined by Zionism, was not merely territorial in nature, nor did Zionism aim only at a geographical concentration of Jewish people in Palestine. From the start Zionist theorists realized that the creation of a social infra-structure for a Jewish national home in Palestine would require a radical restructuring of Jewish social life as it had evolved in the Diaspora, where almost all Jews had been pushed into the ranks of the middle classes; there was in the Diaspora no Jewish peasantry, and hardly a Jewish proletariat. Nation-building, therefore, involved the creation of a Jewish working class and a Jewish peasantry in Palestine—in other words, the overall development of a differentiated social structure. Jewish immigration to Palestine was structurally different from Jewish immigration to the United States, England, or South America; those who left Eastern Europe to make a new home in the West did so in hopes of achieving a higher status in society, but Jewish immigration to Palestine represented *the only intentionally downwardly mobile social movement ever experienced in the history of immigration*. The typical *halutz* was a young middle-class Jew, usually quite well-educated for the circumstances of his age and society, who in going to Palestine turned his back both on the Diaspora and on bourgeois society, and set out to find personal and communal redemption by becoming a worker or a peasant.

In Zionism, then, social vision went hand in hand with nationalism; Zionism could succeed only insofar as it was combined with socialism. Hence the strongly socialist bias of Israel, hence the *kibbutzim*, *kvutzot*, and *moshavim*, hence the establishment of the Histadrut not as a mere trade-union organization, but as a Society of Laborers (*Hevrat Ovdim*), owning industries, paramount in the economic field, leaving its impact on all spheres of Israeli life; hence the hegemony of the labor movement in the political life of the *Yishuv*, hence the insistence on Jewish labor. The entire thrust of the Zionist movement was against the creation of a white, *colon*-like society. The facile analogy that is nowadays made between Israel and South Africa or Algeria is pure non-

sense: Zionism called for self-reliance, doing one's own labor (*avoda atzmit*), the creation of a Jewish working class, absolute opposition to the exploitation of cheap Arab labor by Jewish settlers—in short, the exact opposite of the economic ideology of French Algeria or present-day South Africa.

IN TURNING our attention to Arab society we find a dilemma similar to that faced by Zionism. One tends to forget that before the British and French established themselves in the Middle East, the Arabs were not a self-governing nation: ever since the 13th century, the Arabs in the Middle East had been ruled by a succession of foreign, albeit Moslem, invaders: Seljuks, Osmanli Turks, Mameluke slaves (in Egypt). Even Saladin, victor over the Crusaders at the Horns of Hittin, was a Kurd, not an Arab. When Arab nationalism emerged triumphant from its confrontation with the West, the Arabs, like the Jews, were essentially lacking in the experience of statehood. But because of the militaristic ethos of Islam—an ethos that harks back to the *Conquista* of the Mediterranean by Islamic Arab warriors in the 7th and 8th centuries—Arab society was also characterized by a strongly anti-commercial orientation; indeed, an urban, commercial middle class scarcely existed among Moslem Arabs. For centuries, the commercial middle classes in Arab society consisted of ethnic and religious minorities: Maronites, Greeks, Armenians, Jews, Copts. Arab society was as imbalanced as Jewish society in the Diaspora, though its tilt leaned precisely in the opposite direction.

Very little has been done within the Arab national movement to redress this imbalance, since very little social thought (as distinguished from political ideology) went into the making of Arab nationalism. The greatest trauma suffered by Arab nationalism was the regression of Arab Islamic society from the cultural grandeurs of the High Middle Ages to the dismal backwaters in which Arab society found itself on the threshold of the 20th century, when it came into contact with Europe and found its civilization profoundly inferior to Western culture and technology. In the same way that traditional Islamic thought had paid far less attention to social philosophy than had Christian medieval thought, so modern secular Arab nationalism has consistently stressed political reconstruction at the expense of social reconstruction: according to Arab nationalist ideologies, Arab society would be regenerated once the yoke of Western imperialism was broken. Moreover, the original leaders of the Arab national movement were themselves members of the traditional elites of Arab society, and were naturally disinclined to consider the need for social transformation. Hence the complete and rapid breakdown of the quasi-constitutional political structures left in Arab countries by the departing Western powers,

* The tragic nature of the Arab-Israeli conflict is recognized by most Israeli writers on the subject, a recognition that gives their own nationalism a peculiarly introspective and liberal edge: they are able to perceive the point of view of the other side, even if they do not accept it. Among Arab intellectuals, on the other hand, very few perceive the conflict as tragic or see it as a conflict between *two* claims. One of the most sophisticated Arab writers on the subject, who otherwise brings to it a sensitivity rare among his compatriots, goes so far as to reject altogether the applicability of the tragic dimension, basing his rejection on the claim that tragedy is not "a Semitic idea." See Edward E. Said, "A Palestinian Voice," *Columbia Forum* (Winter 1969).

and the frequent replacement of those structures by military regimes.

Western observers usually interpret the emergence of the military as a sign of modernization and a guarantee of rapid, if forced, progress. Within the Arab context, however, the emergence of military regimes in Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Libya, Sudan, and the Yemen has not signified a breakthrough to modernization, but a reversion to the traditional, legitimate form of government accepted and revered by the Arabs and by Islam for the past fifteen hundred years. Islam, after all, is the Army of the Faithful, the Caliph the Commander of the Faithful. Within the political culture of Arab society, military power equals political legitimacy, and for this reason military leaders have had very little difficulty establishing their authority in Arab countries. That very few voices have ever been raised in the Arab world to question the place of the army in politics is easily understandable: in Arab society, it is as natural and as legitimate for the army to take over power as it is in a Latin American country, or as it was for the Praetorian Guard in the late Roman Empire to become the repository of political authority. In societies created by conquest (Rome, Latin America, and the Arab world), political power not only grows out of the barrel of a gun, it is identical with the gun.

Even in as highly mobile an Arab group as the present-day Palestinians, many of whom have been uprooted from their traditional mode of living and whose condition of exile makes them far less conservative than any other Arab group, the kinds of leadership and political integration that have emerged appeal to the traditional imagination of a people whose history is one of conquest, of continuous warfare, of military glory, and especially of subjugating the vanquished infidel. To a somewhat ignorant Westerner, Yassir Arafat may appear to be a new phenomenon; as a social type, however, he belongs in the same category as Fawzi Kaukji, Hassan Salameh, and Abd el-Kadr el-Husseini—the Palestinian military leaders who in 1948 led their fellow Arabs into tragedy and defeat in their first confrontation with Israel.

It is in this respect too that the Arab military regimes, however radical their ideology, differ in social *praxis* from the revolutionary armies of China, North Vietnam, or Cuba. For in each of these latter countries the traditional, conservative army was overthrown and destroyed, and replaced by the revolutionary people's army which became the new ruling force. In the Arab countries (with the exception of Algeria, whose history is altogether different due to the country's century-long occupation and administration by the French, who completely pulverized the traditional Arab society) it was the *traditional* army that took over political power: no people's army, no revolutionary war. In some cases, as in Egypt, the army then tried to create a social organ as an alternative in-

tegrative force, but the Arab Socialist Union of Egypt is hardly anything more than a front. In Syria, the Ba'ath party is an adjunct of the army: the different factions within the party reflect only the different formations of the Syrian army commands and the different ethnic-religious groups (Alawis, Druzes, Suni Moslems) within the army.

THE LACK of a cohesive social *praxis* in Arab nationalism is reflected in the fate of the Arab refugees. The claim, made by Israel, that the plight of the refugees from the 1948-49 war has been cynically exploited by the Arab governments is, of course, true, though it obviously also serves as a convenient alibi for the Israelis to do nothing about the refugees themselves. But there is something else at work here too, something which became evident to Israelis only after the Six-Day War, when they could visit the camps on the West Bank and in Gaza. A visitor to any of these camps might have expected to find a plethora of Arab voluntary relief organizations actively at work. Certainly a visitor from a Western society, or anyone familiar with similar situations in a Jewish context, might have realistically expected some form of philanthropy or do-goodism, some expression of bad conscience which, after all, does help to make the life of the wretched of the earth a little more bearable. Nothing of the sort. Insofar as voluntary work has been done in the camps (aside from the work of UNWRA), it has been done by various Christian, Western church-relief organizations. In a camp near Ramallah (the most sophisticated and affluent town on the West Bank), one looked in vain for evidence of local efforts to do something concrete for the refugees; the equivalents of Hadassah, ORT, or the JDC were conspicuous by their absence. Every Ramallah burgher, on the other hand, would upon questioning fervently assert his belief in the sacred right of the refugees to be reinstated in their former lands, and his willingness to provide the refugees with all the political support they needed, verbal or otherwise; when it came, however, to a feeling of solidarity, of social responsibility, of a shared fate, the response was total silence. Social relations between Ramallah—and other townships on the West Bank and in Gaza—and the camps were limited to the brutal fact that the camps supplied the town with cheap labor.

It is clearly possible in Arab society for political rhetoric about the rights of refugees to go hand in hand with their severe social exploitation without creating all the uneasy questions such a situation would create in any other society. Even among the refugees themselves, no socially radical movement directed against the socially-entrenched classes has ever emerged. The internalized norms of Arab society operate as strongly among the refugees as they do among the established classes. Thus, the question is not why Arab society has failed to absorb the

refugees economically and socially; one can well understand that leaving the refugees in camps is a rational, if cruel, means of keeping the issue alive. The question is why Arab society has done nothing for the refugees on an interim level, and the answer is to be found not in considerations of politics or propaganda, but in the sheer absence of those societal orientations that make voluntary mutual aid in times of crisis almost an institutional necessity in, say, Jewish social life. The lack of a social dimension in Arab nationalism is as much the scourge of the refugees as it is of Arab society in general.

YET WHATEVER the social nature of Arab nationalism may be, the conflict is still a conflict between it as a movement and the Jewish national movement as embodied in the State of Israel. Indeed, a general recognition of the fact that the conflict is between two movements, rather than between states as such, may perhaps become the key to a possible solution of the Middle East problem. Ultimately, there is no conflict between Israel and Egypt, or between Israel and Syria; the conflict is between Israel and the Palestinians. It is true that this conflict has been in abeyance most of the time between 1949 and 1967, but the reason is that those parts of the British mandate of Palestine that were not incorporated into Israel in 1948 also did not emerge as an independent Arab Palestinian state; rather, they were either annexed by Jordan (as in the case of Judea and Samaria, the so-called "West Bank") or kept under Egyptian military occupation (as in the case of the Gaza Strip). But it is likewise true that scarcely anyone officially recognized Jordan's annexation of the West Bank and of East Jerusalem (most significantly, *no Arab country recognized the annexation*), and everyone who knew anything about the Middle East was well aware that the Palestinians were far from happy under the rule of King Hussein and his Bedouin army, whom they considered inferior to them in culture and learning (Hussein springs from a dynasty whose historical abode has been the Hedjaz, now in Saudi Arabia, and his grandfather had been installed in Transjordan after World War I by the British). Nevertheless, although all this was known, nobody really bothered about the Palestinians, since the uneasy stalemate between Israel and the Arab countries created the illusion that the basic problems would somehow be solved with the passage of time. Came the 1967 war, and all the old questions were ripped open again, and the Palestinian Arabs were now brought into the consciousness—and conscience—of the world.

It now seems clear that any settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict that does not deal with the problem of Palestinian self-identity will fall short of the requirements of a truly peaceful solution. The Palestinian organizations have said time and

again—and their statements should be taken seriously—that even if the Arab *states* make peace with Israel, they will go on fighting. Under such circumstances, the border situation between the Arab states and Israel will remain tenuous in the extreme. The same can be said of what would happen in the case of an "imposed solution" by the Great Powers—a settlement short of peace but guaranteeing cessation of hostilities. Those who desire such a solution—their number includes some Israelis—have in mind a model drawn from the situation in 1957, when Israel was forced to retreat from Sinai under Great Power pressure and in return was given some guarantee that the border with Egypt would be kept quiet, as it really was until May 1967.

But 1970 is not 1957. The powers may impose a settlement on Israel and the Arabs (I myself tend to doubt the possibility of this, but am ready to grant it for the sake of argument), but neither the United States nor the Soviet Union can impose a settlement on the Palestinian organizations. The options open after the Sinai War of 1956 are simply not open today, since one has now to deal not only with Egypt and Jordan, but with the Palestinians as well, and the latter will not abide by any settlement to which they are not a party. For it has been precisely the Palestinians who have by their activities succeeded in frustrating what little hope there was after 1967 of reaching an accommodation between Israel and Jordan.

The trouble, of course, is that the Palestinians today are committed to the same maximalist policies that spelled their doom in 1948, when they rejected the UN partition plan and thereby jeopardized their chance to establish an Arab state in a part of Palestine. As a "war of liberation," the guerrilla effort is hopeless; it can cause a great deal of damage to Israel's image, it can kill quite a number of Israelis, but it cannot win a war, "liberate" the occupied territories, or destroy Israel. The West Bank is less than half the size of New Jersey; it contains no swamps, jungles, or mountain ridges. Anyone who thinks in terms of Algeria or South Vietnam is deluding himself; the geography of the West Bank simply cannot become the territorial base any guerrilla movement needs in order to succeed. This is why the Arab guerrilla effort has characteristically fallen back on personal and indiscriminate terrorism. But while terrorism of this kind often *accompanies* a true guerrilla war (again, Algeria and South Vietnam may serve as examples), in the Palestinian case terrorism has become a *substitute* for guerrilla war. Exploding a bomb in a supermarket or university may kill a lot of people, but it will not win a war. Throwing hand grenades at Arab refugees in front of an Israeli labor exchange may deter them from cooperating with Israeli efforts at economic rehabilitation; it will not win a war. Ultimately, this kind of terrorism is a sign of failure. Indeed, it is reminiscent of the terrorism prac-

ticed during 1936-39 by followers of the Mufti; in each case, guerrilla warfare, having failed in its objectives, deteriorated into a dirty, indiscriminate orgy of murder, which in the end killed more fellow Arabs (suspected of collaboration or of selling land to the Jews) than Jews or British soldiers. In the 30's the ideology flowing out of the barrel of terrorist guns was fascist rather than quasi-Marxist, but the Israeli confronted with a bomb in a bus station has the uncanny feeling of *déjà vu*.

Nevertheless, in my opinion, it is the Palestinians, despite their failure to achieve their aims through military or terroristic means, to whom one may look for a way out of the present impasse. For the purposes of the ensuing discussion, I will rather mechanically divide the Palestinians into two categories: (a) those under Israeli rule in Judea and Samaria (the "West Bank") and in the Gaza Strip; and (b) those on the East Bank of the Jordan (the old Transjordan), in the rump of Hussein's Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Let me begin with the latter group, those under Hussein's rule, both because with regard to them Israel can do very little to affect possible developments and because it seems to me that precisely with regard to them Israel should begin to rethink some of her conventional political wisdom.

BEFORE 1967, Jordan was, next to Lebanon, the most accommodating of Israel's neighbors, and accordingly Israeli political thinking grew accustomed to the notion that Israel had a stake in the continuation of King Hussein's rule. Indeed, Israel had made it clear several times that she would have to react in the event of a radical, pro-Egyptian coup in Jordan. There is little doubt that because of this stance Israel has more than once prevented a Nasserite takeover in Jordan. In 1958, in the wake of the Iraqi *coup d'état*, Israel allowed British aircraft to overfly her territory en route to Jordan to bolster Hussein's regime against a possible revolt. And after the Six-Day War, Israeli hopes focused on Hussein as the Arab ruler most likely to be willing to negotiate with Israel; in the summer of 1967, government leaders as diverse in their political opinions as Moshe Dayan and Abba Eban adopted a policy of "waiting for the phone to ring" from Amman.

Today, it appears improbable that King Hussein, even if he were willing, would be able to move toward an accommodation with Israel. A virtual condominium now exists in Jordan, with Hussein retaining his throne only at the mercy of *Al Fatah*. For the guerrillas, who rule while the King reigns, this is an optimal solution: they have power without responsibility. In addition, the King's presence ultimately serves to provide the guerrillas with an American umbrella. That is, because of U.S. relations with Hussein, Israel is under a severe handicap in dealing with the guer-

rillas, who thus get Soviet arms and indirect American protection.

Out of inertia and a spirit of accommodation, Israel has continued to stake her chances on Hussein. But the truth is that Hussein is now an obstacle to peace. Were he to vanish from the scene—a prospect that is particularly painful for the U.S. to consider—a chain of events might be set in motion that could be more conducive to eventual peace than his continuing presence has proved itself to be.

The majority of the Jordanian population east of the river is Palestinian in origin; Transjordanian Bedouins are a minority. Historically speaking, Transjordan was always a part of what has been considered Palestine, and it was included in the territory given by mandate to Great Britain after World War I. However, in order to find a throne for Britain's protégé Abdullah, Winston Churchill in 1922 ruled that the provisions of the Balfour Declaration did not apply to the area east of the Jordan. Transjordan was thus turned into a semi-autonomous Emirate, but until the end of World War II the British High Commissioner for Palestine was also vested with ultimate power with regard to Transjordan.

Now, it is my view that if tomorrow the Palestinian guerrillas were to overthrow King Hussein—they have the power to do so—and proclaim the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Palestine, something more would be achieved than a mere exercise in semantics. A Palestinian Arab state, populated by more than a million Palestinians, would come into existence, albeit in only a part of what the Arabs consider the whole of Palestine. The Palestinians would thus come back into their own. I entertain no illusions that this would satisfy the maximalist Palestinian claims, and I have no doubt that the Palestinians would in all probability continue to hope for the destruction of Israel. Nevertheless, the grievance at the root of the conflict—the frustration of the Palestinians—would be greatly alleviated. Palestinian Arabs would have a state of their own, their "homelessness" would be to some degree remedied, a place would be set for them in the councils of nations with an army, a flag, and all the trappings of sovereignty. They would, in other words, regain their consciousness of existing on a political level.

Some observers, especially in Israel, consider such a development highly dangerous, since they claim that it would mean a radicalization of Jordan and the replacement of the moderate Hussein by an extremist like, say, Yassir Arafat. *But Jordan is already radicalized*, and it is difficult to imagine how the Palestinians, once in power, could be more radical than they are today. Moreover, one of the paradoxes of Arab society is that only radicals can afford to be moderate, while moderates tend to play to the radical gallery (compare the violent behavior of the moderate

Hussein with the moderate behavior of the radical Syrians on June 5, 1967). It may well be that a new, radical Palestinian regime in Jordan would behave in reality very much like the present military regime in Syria, which has managed since the Six-Day War to combine the most radical ideological anti-Israel stance with a surprisingly moderate and pragmatic attitude in the field; despite some recent deterioration, the Israeli-Syrian ceasefire line has been much quieter than the Israeli-Egyptian or the Israeli-Jordanian frontiers.

If the guerrillas became the government in Jordan, it would be difficult for them, even if they received Soviet support, to escalate their military activity beyond the present level. For they would then have to take account of the price the population in the Jordan Valley is paying for their activities—a consideration which they now dump in Hussein's lap. It is a historical truism that an underground movement, once come into formal, political power, tends to become responsible, and respectable, in the exercise of authority. In all, I think it eminently worthwhile for Israelis, who shudder at the thought of *Al Fatah* taking over Jordan, to have second thoughts on the matter.

BUT THESE developments, to repeat, are outside Israel's sphere of direct involvement, and Israel can do very little to bring them about. Israel can, however, initiate a number of steps with regard to the other category of Palestinians—those now under her rule on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip.

The kind of military administration set up by Israel in these territories after the Six-Day War was a brilliant improvisation; as a temporary measure, it provided Israel with maximum security while allowing minimum interference in the life of the local population. The general idea was that the less the military administration meddled in the daily affairs of the population, the better, and the result is that today Arab municipal self-government on the West Bank and in Gaza remains intact, and Jordanian and Egyptian laws are still the law of the land. Yet, basically, this entire policy was conceived as a stopgap measure, intended to maintain law and order until negotiations between Israel and the Arab states got under way, as most Israelis were sure they would. Now, three years after the war, one must deal with the real possibility that the provisional will be transfigured into the semi-permanent. Liberal and minimalist as this sort of administration may be, furthermore, it still is a military form of government, and Israel is considered an occupying power by the local inhabitants. All the benevolent care taken by the military administration in matters of agriculture and medical and social services is, ultimately, offset by the need to protect Israel from the guerrillas, which means arrests, interrogations, and the imposition of curfews when a grenade is thrown at a tourist bus or at a group of

Jewish worshipers in Hebron or at Israeli housewives in Gaza. Israel has refrained from passing death sentences on perpetrators of such acts, but the long prison terms meted out do not endear the Israelis to the local population.

In my opinion, what Israel has to do now is to make clear its readiness to discuss peace terms not only with the Arab states, but also with the representatives of the Palestinians. What I have in mind specifically is a discussion with the Palestinians now under Israeli rule concerning the possibility of establishing a Palestinian Arab state on the West Bank and in Gaza.

Such a proposal, of course, comes up against a host of difficulties: the envisioned state will need access to the sea, as well as facilities for secure communication between the West Bank and Gaza; Jerusalem will undoubtedly be a thorny problem, and Israel will have to insist on some guarantees for her security along the Jordan river. But, once negotiations were undertaken, the fundamental issue would have been breached, for the Palestinians would then be the first Arab group ever to acknowledge the legitimacy of Israel. Premier Golda Meir once said, in rejecting a proposal that Israel negotiate with the Palestinians: "Is what the Arabs need a fourteenth or fifteenth state?" The Arabs may not need such a state; the *Palestinians* do. Israel too may not need a fourteenth Arab state—but she is in dire need of the *first* Arab state to accept her existence and to be willing to enter into negotiations.

But why, it may be asked, should the Palestinians under Israeli rule wish to do what no other Arab state has ever been ready to do—accept Israel's legitimacy? Some, like Aziz Shehade, himself a refugee from Jaffa and now a lawyer in Ramallah, and perhaps the most courageous Palestinian leader on the West Bank, say openly that this may be the chance the Palestinians missed in 1948 to establish their own state. Others, like the Mayor of Hebron, Sheikh Ali al-Ja'abri, may be more cautious, believing that some arrangement will eventually be made, either directly between Israel and Jordan or diplomatically through the Powers, that will bring Jordanian rule back to the West Bank. But on various occasions Ja'abri has indicated that if this does not happen in the near future, then it will be up to the Palestinians to negotiate with Israel on their own, psychologically difficult as that may be. To all the Arab *states* Israel has very little to offer in return for negotiations; to the Palestinians it can offer independence, sovereignty, and honor.

Ja'abri and his colleagues are aware that once they entered into negotiations with Israel they would be branded as traitors by their fellow Arabs. But, as the present stalemate continues, more and more Palestinians in the areas under Israeli rule may come to realize that the choice before them, though brutal, is also simple: either do nothing and continue to be ruled by Israel, or ne-

gotiate in order to achieve independence. Given Arab pride, and the utter unwillingness of Arab states to recognize Israel even at immense cost to their own societies, this may be a long and agonizing process; but more and more Arab intellectuals on the West Bank are beginning to think along the lines of possible negotiation, though few have as yet mustered the courage of Shehade to say in public what they are ready to concede in private.

Israel, in all events, must be prepared for such an eventuality. It would be foolhardy for Israel to come out with an actual plan for a Palestinian state or even to state publicly that she "recognizes" such vague concepts as a "Palestinian entity," as some rather naive do-gooders have suggested she do. At the outset Israel should limit herself to stating clearly and unequivocally that she considers the Palestinians as partners for future negotiations in the same way that she is ready to negotiate with any Arab government. This would give an immense push to those Palestinians who are at present toying with the idea, but who would never come out into the open unless assured in advance that Israel will not turn them down flat.

The question, of course, arises as to who are the proper representatives of the Palestinians. Roughly speaking, one should name first the indigenous leadership on the West Bank, people like Ja'abri, the Mayor of Hebron; Hamdi Canaan, the ex-Mayor of Nablus; Hikmet al-Masri of Nablus, the former Speaker of the Jordanian Parliament; and many others. I myself, however, would be ready to go further. In Israel, any suggestion that Israel negotiate with the Palestinians is immediately challenged by the question: "Suppose Yassir Arafat wishes to negotiate; are you ready to sit down and talk with him?" I would answer in the affirmative, although, to be frank, I do not think there is any chance whatsoever that Arafat, given his maximalist program, would wish to negotiate with Israel. Of course, should a serious shift occur in Arafat's political posture, and should he then indicate a willingness to negotiate, I believe strongly that Israel—taking all the necessary precautions—should respond positively; an Arafat willing to negotiate with Israel would represent a very different political animal from the present Arafat, who is committed to her destruction.

It is naturally difficult, if not downright impossible, to spell out in detail what kind of relationship one would like to see emerging between Israel and the proposed Palestinian Arab state. In a way, the proposal itself goes back to the substance, though not to the details, of the principle at the root of the UN plan of 1947: since two national movements claim a relationship to the land, the most equitable solution would be partition. Seen from this angle, the question as posed

today has very little to do with the traditional claims of traditional Zionism; whatever views one may entertain about the historical claims of Zionism, the issue today is existential, not historic-philosophic: there are two and a half million Jews in Israel who view it as their home, as the expression of their national self-consciousness. Just as it is impossible to overlook the legitimacy of Palestinian Arab nationalism, it is impossible to deny the same right to the Israelis.

Since the establishment of a Palestinian Arab state could today become possible only if the Palestinians on the West Bank accepted the legitimacy of Israel, one might hope that the relationship between these two states, if not cordial or friendly, could still be based on something approaching minimal decency. Ultimately one would probably like to see a federation established, but that is a long-term hope; federation is based on mutual trust, a commodity conspicuously absent today but one which may be encouraged to develop through a less formal structure of cooperation between the two states. There is no doubt, for example, that part of Israel's burden in any accommodation with the Palestinians would be generous financial aid toward the rehabilitation of the refugees on the West Bank and in Gaza.

The inclusion of Gaza in the proposed Palestinian Arab state would, it is true, impose on the new state a territorial discontinuity, but I believe that preferable to the retention of Gaza by Israel. In human and political terms the Gaza Strip represents the most stubborn refugee problem of all, and Israel would lose any genuine chance of solving the problem if it tried to hold on to Gaza and its 250,000 refugees. In general, tempting as it may be for academics (myself included) to argue the fine points of an eventual settlement, it is at this stage a futile exercise. The first priority, for Israel and the Palestinians alike, is mutual recognition of the legitimacy of one another's national movement. Once mutual recognition is achieved, the territorial details, formidable as they may now appear, will lose much of their intractability.

There is, however, a more potent objection to the idea of establishing a Palestinian Arab state on the West Bank. This objection does not stem from considerations of ideology, but is based on the simple argument that so long as the Palestinians in other countries, mainly in Jordan east of the river, do not accept such a solution, it will, after all, solve nothing. The Palestinians on the West Bank and in Gaza may make their peace with Israel, but *Al Fatah*, or a section of it, will go on fighting Israel. What, then, will have been achieved? There is no doubt a very strong element of truth in this contention. But in putting forth a proposal for the establishment of a Palestinian state on the West Bank and in Gaza I have tried to be as pragmatic—and as minimalist—as possible, and have attempted to eschew more grandiose, and hence utopian, solutions. It would

of course be ideal if Israel could make peace with *all* of the Palestinians; but if this is at the moment impossible, should she not at least try to achieve some kind of understanding with *some* of them? Nobody, after all, argues against a detente between the U.S. and the Soviet Union on the grounds that it will not solve the American dispute with China.

But to be more concrete: a situation in which about half the Palestinians will make peace with Israel is, after all, very different from a situation in which *all* of them reject Israel's legitimacy, lock, stock, and barrel. And a partial solution, in which some significant proportion of Palestinians can achieve self-determination, self-esteem, and dignity, and live peacefully with Israel, might point the way toward the acceptance of Israel by other Palestinians as well. There is no doubt that even moderate Palestinians—I have met many on the West Bank since the Six-Day War—are in a way forced into a posture of extremism by the total refusal of official Israel policy to accept their legitimate claims. It is a safe assumption that many Palestinian moderates in Jordan east of the river may similarly gravitate toward a less brutal solution than the one advocated by *Al Fatah* if they were given a chance by Israel to realize, even in a small Arab Palestine, their aspiration for self-assertion.

WE COME NOW to the question of Israeli attitudes toward a possible settlement with the Palestinians, and the first thing to be said is that those attitudes are not in the least polarized along the conventional line that separates "doves" from "hawks." The division is rather a generational one, separating the old guard, the Eastern European Zionists, from the younger generation born and educated in Israel. Generally speaking, the older generation seems to be more close-minded about the Palestinians than does the younger generation.

The reasons for this split are to be found in a complex of ideological and existential considerations. For the older generation of Israeli leaders, Zionism provided the ideological justification for immigration to the Land of Israel; hence, for them to accept the legitimacy of Palestinian nationalism may in some way require them to reflect adversely on their own: if the Palestinian Arabs have some claim, some right to this country, maybe Zionism was wrong from the start? The traditional, archetypal Zionist is a man beset with insecurity and with a tendency to over-react, a man who still has to *prove* his claim, and is therefore likely to be blind to a competing claim. For the younger generation of Israelis, these problems of legitimacy, justification, and (ultimately) apologetics, are of considerably less importance. It is their existence as a nation that counts, not its justification; their nationalism is existential rather than ideological. For them the Arabs are not a

foreign element whom they found to their surprise inhabiting the Promised Land of their ancestors; so far as they are concerned, and for as long as they remember, the Arabs have been part of their ambience. Whether they like the Arabs or not, they have learned to live with them and adjust to their presence.

We can pass over the Israeli maximalists, most of whom belong to the Herut party and who are naturally opposed to negotiations with the Palestinians. If negotiations ever materialized, Herut would surely leave the government or be made to leave. That is not the problem. The ultimate decision lies with the Labor party leadership, and here the generational division is very evident. A typical example of the older generation is the Prime Minister, Golda Meir. Despite her tough-mindedness, Mrs. Meir would be an accommodating and reasonable negotiator with any of the Arab states; when it comes to the Palestinian Arabs, however, she is hard as a rock. Asked recently about the Palestinians, she answered: "Since 1948 nobody ever heard about a Palestinian entity. Where have they been?"* And at a meeting with students at the Hebrew University she brushed aside an inquiry about Palestinian Arab identity by claiming simply that the only Palestinians who ever existed were those who held British Palestinian Mandate passports, adding that "between 1921 and 1948 I personally held a Palestinian passport."† On another occasion Mrs. Meir maintained that the Palestinian Arabs *never* had any sense of identity in national terms, since before 1918 they referred to the area involved as "Southern Syria" rather than as Palestine. This highly historical, ideologically charged attitude is very much in evidence in similar statements made by veteran Israeli leaders like Zalman Aranne, the former Minister of Education, a super-dove who before the last election showed a total unwillingness to entertain any notion of possible accommodation with the Palestinians, and like Israel Galili, one of Golda Meir's closest advisors, who in a public controversy over the issue came out very strongly against any acceptance of the Palestinian Arab claim to constitute a nation.‡

As I have noted, the younger generation of Israeli leaders hold completely different attitudes. For those who do not know Israel well, it might seem curious that foremost among these younger leaders is Moshe Dayan. Whatever his image and function as Israel's Minister of Defense, Dayan is intensely sensitive to the mood of the Palestinians, a fact of which the Palestinians in the territories under Israeli rule are well aware. Dayan once surprised a student audience in Tel Aviv when he told of his meeting with the young Palestinian poetess Fadwa Toukan of Nablus. He then

* *Ha'aretz*, February 10, 1970.

† *Pi Ha'aton* (Jerusalem students' weekly), March 3, 1970.

‡ *Ma'ariv*, May 25, 1969.

went on to recite a Hebrew translation of a very long, extremely moving, and outspokenly nationalistic poem of hers about Jerusalem called "My City, Occupied." It was, to say the least, an eerie experience for an Israeli audience to hear an Arab lament about the loss of Jerusalem, recited by the Israeli Minister of Defense. To the hushed audience, which could not but have recalled Yehuda Halevi's lamentation on the captivity of Zion, Dayan then said:

We have to make an utmost effort to establish contacts with the million Arabs with whom and next to whom we are destined to live. We have to come and understand their background, their emotional climate, whether we like it or not. I know only too well that at this stage, at first, this will be a one-way road: even if we understand them, they will not understand us. But even so, we have to go and listen to them in the hope that one day they will listen to us.*

Less publicized, but more important, than this incident were several abortive attempts made by Dayan to establish a liaison with Palestinian leaders on the West Bank. Of all Israel's political leaders, Dayan, in his pragmatism and non-ideological brand of politics, is probably the most open-minded about a solution that would allow the Palestinians the kind of political organization least injurious to their self-esteem and national consciousness.

Though Yigal Allon, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education, is at present Dayan's political rival, his attitudes to the Palestinian aspect of the Arab-Israeli conflict are of a similar nature. In a number of recent newspaper interviews, Allon advocated the setting up of autonomous self-governing bodies on the West Bank, as a first step toward Home Rule (itself an "interim stage").† The new Secretary General of the Israeli Labor Party, Arie Eliav (the first member of the younger group in the Labor party ever to hold this influential position) created a stir when immediately after being elected he made a strong statement in favor of the rights of the Palestinians:

Let the Arab people know that we shall never suppress the right of the Palestinians for self-determination and that we are ready to help them establish a state in which they will find fulfillment for their national aspirations.‡

Another young member of the Israeli cabinet, Shlomo Hillel, who, as Minister of Police, shares with Dayan a great deal of responsibility for Israel's internal security, has also advocated an open-minded attitude toward the problem of the Palestinians.**

TO THIS list one should add an extremely interesting multiple interview with three of Israel's outstanding ex-Generals, two of whom were at one time or another Chiefs of In-

telligence and hence have a better view of the Arab world than almost anybody else in Israel (Yehoshafat Harkabi, Chaim Herzog, and Elad Peled).†† Each in his own way suggested in the interview that Israel try to approach the Palestinians. Of the three, Harkabi was the most skeptical about the possibilities of success, but he was ready to concede that Israel "should recognize the Palestinian entity, if only to get rid of the subject." Herzog maintained that Israel missed a golden opportunity when she failed to implement a policy of negotiating with the Palestinians immediately after the Six-Day War. He added: "I believe that we have no chance of achieving any settlement with the Arab world except through the Palestinians." Peled, one of the most sensitive and intellectually sophisticated men ever associated with the Israeli army, raised the issue to the level of principle: "During the years of the conflict, the Palestinian Arab community asserted its national self-identity. . . . In the same way that we have claimed national self-determination for ourselves, we have to recognize it also for those who live alongside us."

One could go on with numerous examples of this kind. What they have in common is the fact that (a) sentiments like these are usually expressed by Israelis of the younger generation, and (b) the statements grow more intense with every passing month. As the present stalemate is seen to lead nowhere, more and more Israelis are beginning to view the Palestinians as possible partners to a solution. One should, however, add a final name to the list—that of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Abba Eban, who until recently was very strongly opposed to any contacts with the Palestinians, mainly because he believed, probably more deeply than any other Israeli, in the possibility of an accommodation with Hussein. Recently Eban appears to have realized that the Jordanian option is now closed, and he has made announcements to the effect that the conflict should be seen in terms of an Israeli-Palestinian confrontation, though he has thus far stopped short of suggesting what form the future identity of the Palestinians should take.

* Speech at a student meeting, Tel Aviv, October 16, 1968. In his recent volume of collected speeches, Dayan devoted a whole chapter to "Our Palestinian Neighbors."

† Speech to the Foreign Press Association, reported in *Jerusalem Post*, October 14, 1969; interview with Ari Rath, *Jerusalem Post*, October 24, 1969. The idea of some kind of autonomous rule has been taken up by the small, but intellectually influential Independent Liberal party, which passed a resolution calling upon the government to proceed on these lines (*Ha'aretz*, March 15, 1970).

‡ Arie Eliav, *Ye'adim hadashim le-Israel* [New goals for Israel] (Tel Aviv, 1969), p. 11. See also his interview in *Time*, January 26, 1970.

** Dan Margalit, "Hayeshut ha-Palestinait" [The Palestinian Entity], *Ha'aretz*, March 13, 1970.

†† The interview was published in *Ha'aretz* weekly magazine, February 20, 1970; an English translation appeared in the April 1970 issue of *Midstream*.

Though there is no doubt that the continuing war of attrition has caused a hardening of the Israeli position in general, an attitude more open-minded toward the Palestinians is becoming, on the other hand, increasingly pronounced among younger Israelis who do not suffer from the traumas of the older generation. Whenever an Israeli leader puts in an appearance at a university campus, he is sure to be asked very persistently about his views on a possible accommodation with the Palestinian Arabs on the West Bank—a situation that did not obtain two years ago. Newspaper articles, letters to the editor, symposia and panel discussions on radio and TV devote far more space and time today to this aspect of the Israeli-Arab predicament than ever before. One of Israel's leading young experts on Arab history, Shimon Shamir of Tel Aviv University, made a large impact on the Israeli public with a series of articles on the subject, as did a young Israeli general-cum-scholar, Matityahu Peled. The continuing stalemate is bound to heighten Israeli sensitivity on this subject, just as it is bound to bring more Palestinian Arabs to the realization that negotiations with Israel may be the only way to regain Arab control of the West Bank. On the other hand, those, like Golda Meir, who continue to ask "Who are the Palestinians?," seem increasingly out of touch with reality; for it is Palestinian organizations that send their members to kill and maim Israelis, and it is against members of Palestinian organizations that Israeli patrols lie in nightly ambush in the Jordan Valley. Under such conditions anyone still questioning the existence of Arabs who consider themselves Palestinian is talking ideology, not facts.

IT MAY BE that mutual recognition between the two movements for national liberation, and the establishment of a Palestine Arab state on the West Bank, are a distant prospect. But as a possible solution, perhaps the only solution, to the clash between the two national movements, it is manifestly superior to, as well as more realistic than, the vague proposal, put forward in some quarters, for a "non-denominational," "bi-national" Palestine, in which Arabs and Jews would live peacefully side by side. In such a state, one community is bound to emerge as a majority, the other as a minority. As an Israeli, I certainly would not like to live as a member of a minority Jewish community in a country with an Arab majority; neither would I like to be a member of the Jewish majority in a country that had an Arab minority of about two million people. "Bi-nationalism," noble as it may sound, overlooks the dynamism of modern nationalism and in a way fails to take seriously both the Jewish and the Arab claim for nationhood and sovereignty. Cyprus and Nigeria provide two rather poor examples of bi- or multi-nationalism in a situation of tension; even Belgium and Canada show

serious internal strains precisely because of the fact that "bi-nationalism" tends to institutionalize rather than to resolve tensions, suspicions, and national traumas. Arab nationalism, it should be noted, has been particularly nasty in its treatment of ethnic or religious minorities—as the examples of the Kurds in Iraq or of the blacks in Southern Sudan suffice to demonstrate.

Over the last century the Jews and the Palestinian Arabs have emerged into national movements, each craving a home, a place in the sun, a corner of the earth it can call its own. Throwing both of them into a state which would be neither Jewish nor Arab would make it impossible for either movement to overcome mutual tension and start cooperating with the other. A "bi-national" state, moreover, would run immediately into problems such as the relations between the Jewish sector and world Jewry, immigration, and links with the Arab world; how on earth could questions like these, which are at the root of the present conflict, ever be peacefully resolved within a single body politic? Instead of giving each national movement its due, a "bi-national" state would castrate and frustrate both national movements. Advocates of such a solution even overlook the fact that their program founders on the seemingly trivial but very fundamental question of name. Following *Al Fatah* propaganda, they take it for granted that their proposed state ("democratic," and "secular") would be called Palestine. But why should two-and-a-half million Israeli Jews consent to live in a state called Palestine, any more than two million Palestinian Arabs should consent to live in a state called Israel? When it comes to national movements, it is the grossest folly to ignore questions of consciousness—of symbols, dates, historic events, heroes, and national imagery. Both the Palestinians and the Israelis have rich national cultures, and both wish to develop those cultures and maintain their specific links to groups all over the world to which they feel allied: the Israelis to world Jewry, the Palestinians to the Arab world and Islam. In this connection, the example of Lebanon, which is often cited as a paradigm, is seriously misleading. For in Lebanon, the various groups—Muslims, Christians, Druzes—all consider themselves Arabs, use Arabic as their language, and relate directly to Arab culture and Arab history; their differences lie in the religious sphere. The Israelis, however, are emphatically *not* Arabs of the Jewish religion.

The conflict between Israel and the Arabs that arose in historic Palestine can come to an end if both protagonists will accept each other's legitimacy. Israel has to accept the legitimate claim of the Palestinian Arabs to a state of their own on the West Bank, ultimately also perhaps integrating Transjordan; the Palestinians have to accept the legitimacy of Israel. It is the tragedy of the Palestinians that at present every one of their

organizations (PLO, *Al Fatah*, PFLP, PDFLP, *et al.*) denies the legitimacy of Israel and thus helps to frustrate any possible Israeli attempt to accommodate to the facts of Palestinian Arab nationalism. On the Israeli side, the great hope is the younger generation, which bears the brunt of the battle, and which is far more open-minded about the Palestinians than its elders; were the Israeli government to give some concrete expression to the mood of younger Israelis, an important step forward will have been taken. At that point it will be the turn of the Palestinian Arabs on the West Bank to take up the challenge, and by accepting the legitimacy of Israel pave the way for taking their place in that historic land which, for better or worse, they have to share with the Israelis.

One of the leading scholars of Arab nationalism, George Antonius, ended his *The Arab Awakening* in 1938 with the warning: "The logic of facts is inexorable. It shows that no room can be

made in Palestine for a second nation except by dislodging or exterminating the nation in possession." Because the Arabs have behaved according to this formula, events have tended to prove Antonius right. But his words were nothing more than a self-fulfilling prophecy, and hence he shares, with many other Arab intellectuals who think like him, some of the moral responsibility for the tragedy of the Palestinians. Israelis and Palestinians can now prove Antonius wrong. Both nations *can* coexist in the area of historic Palestine, each in its own sovereign state. But the path to coexistence leads neither through the force of arms alone nor through the somewhat impotent channels of diplomacy. Since it is a conflict between two national movements, it is a conflict also over consciousness, and as Hegel rightly pointed out, such conflicts can be solved only through mutual recognition. This is the challenge which now confronts both Israelis and Palestinians.

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